

Michael F. Easley
Governor



State of North Carolina
Office of the Governor

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GOV. EASLEY PRESENTS PILOT WITH ORDER OF THE LONG LEAF PINE
Raleigh Pilot Scott Burke Receives Recognition for Saving the Lives of 140 Airline Passengers

RALEIGH – Gov. Mike Easley today presented Raleigh pilot Capt. Scott Burke with an Order of the Long Leaf Pine. During a Sept. 21 flight from Burbank, Calif., Burke successfully landed his JetBlue plane with a crippled nose wheel at Los Angeles International Airport, saving the lives of 140 passengers.

“Capt. Burke exhibited true courage and skill under tremendous pressure,” Easley said. “The 140 passengers on Flight 292 survived because of his bravery. We are proud to recognize him as a hero and as a North Carolinian.”

Burke was flying JetBlue Airways Flight 292 from Burbank when his crew noticed a caution light indicating there was a problem with the plane’s landing gear. He circled past the Long Beach Airport Control Tower, where flight controllers were able to observe that the nose wheel on the plane had not retracted and was twisted sideways. Burke flew the plane in circles for three hours to burn off fuel then landed the plane safely at Los Angeles International Airport.

Burke grew up in Bloomington, Minn., and has lived in Raleigh for 15 years. He received his bachelor’s degree in forestry from the University of Minnesota. After earning his pilot’s license, he earned enough flight hours serving as a flight instructor to get a job with a commercial airline. He has been a pilot for almost 20 years and has worked for JetBlue Airways for five years. His brother is a pilot and his father is a retired pilot.

The Order of the Long Leaf Pine is presented to outstanding North Carolinians who have a proven record of service to the state. The Order of the Long Leaf Pine is one of the highest awards presented by the governor.

(Media Note: If you would like a photo to publish with this story, please contact the Press Office at 919/ 733-5612.)

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